



ROC News

The Magazine of the Rampart Owners Club

Volume 4, Issue 11, Spring 2013



WINTER ON A RAMPART

Winter on Roly was very cosy, with the fuel stove combusting every bit of waste wood on Cadogan Pier. Fortunately, a new floor was being laid on a big barge and the wooden sides of the pontoon were being replaced, so plenty of firewood came our way to keep us toasty.

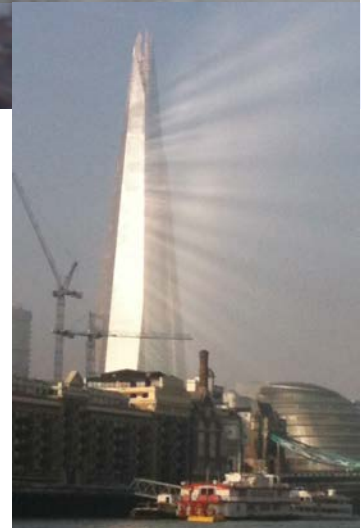
We had a few jollies in Roly, down river to Tower Bridge and back but unfortunately, in December, we had to cancel a trip to The Boaters Inn in Kingston, where we had booked the pontoon outside and dinner for 30 inside for my birthday. It had rained so much that red cards were out on the non-tidal Thames, and the Teddington Lock keepers, strongly advised us not to go there. Instead, we took our guests, in two boats, for a spin through all the sights of London, down to The Tower and back, wrapped up in furs, ski wear, hats gloves & boots. The less hardy, stayed warm and snug round the stove in the wheelhouse.

We were all then transported one way or another, by road, to The Boater's, where we had a great meal and the odd glass of wine! Looking out to pub's pontoon, it looked tranquil, especially as we are used to 5 kts running past us on a daily basis but with a boat full of people, it's best to do as the Lock Keepers advise! The last cruise down river was in February, for the 50th birthday of our neighbour, Hugh on Oyster Boy, (a 50ft 1940's fishing vessel), to Hermitage Pier, just beyond Tower Bridge. It's a private pier, owned and built by the barge owners that are moored there. They keep two spaces for visitors, (handy to know if you don't want to go into St Katherine's Dock), so Roly and Oyster Boy moored up and began preparations for the party the next day, in Hermitage Pier's communal area.

A great lunch party with all Hugh's friends, developed into a lovely evening, eating, drinking and chatting.

In the morning, as the sun broke through the cold misty February air, the shard beamed out rays of light, reminiscent of a William Blake painting. It was like a miracle, not just the rays but the fact that the sun was shining. We'd forgotten what it looked like.

Family and friends came down to enjoy a gentle cruise in the winter sun, back to Cadogan Pier. Continues on p3



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Commodore's Letter

by Christopher Morrison

Last autumn I wrote 'Except for a few of the more hardened members, I suspect this season [summer 2012] was a bit of a disappointment as far as using our boats was concerned.' Well, I expect that this last winter was also a 'bit of a disappointment....' Certainly, at the time of writing [April] we haven't put Penny Jane back in the water and this is the latest we have ever been. The cold and wet have been a real disincentive to getting any work done, although we have renewed

By the time you read this we will either be in the Yacht Club at Littlehampton enjoying Sunday lunch at the Rally weekend,



or the weather would have precluded any boats from getting there.

Let's hope the former.

Importantly, we need to look towards 2014 and the proposed Rally in London. Jeremy Pearce has been very active in scouting locations and drawing up a programme for us. The dates are 21-27 July in St Katherine's Dock. I do hope all the Thames-based boats will be there; I certainly hope to get PJ there from Emsworth, and I hope others from a bit further afield can make it. If it is too far for the boats, perhaps owners can come without them. It would be lovely to see some of our overseas members there for a day or so. Please block off the week in your diaries and await a more detailed programme in due course.

The autumn 2012 meeting in Limehouse Basin was a great success and enhanced by a talk from the project manager of the Cutty Sark restoration.

What a project - and I thought I had problems!

Finally my continuing thanks to the officers of the Club: Liz as she struggles with a new computer & software for the magazine, Ken for keeping the membership updated and writing to new members, John for setting up the new bank account for Rampart finances and for taking on Treasurer, Stephen for his continuing role as archivist - but see another article in this magazine outlining future plans in this area.

The Trad Boat Rally, in Henley, will be on 20th July and Roly will be hosting a drinks party at 6pm. Hope to see you all there.

With all best wishes for a sunny and calm summer season. **CM**

our saloon upholstery - the old cushions were stuffed with horsehair and underneath were covered with a stretchy draylon material beloved of fitted chair covers in married quarters in the 1970s. Otherwise it has been a winter of repainting the inside of the boat and having graving pieces let in to a few of the soft patches in the planking.

The anti-fouling, finally, on successfully, (see opp. page) thanks to the efforts of my daughter - we give her a day digging her allotment, she gives us a day of anti-fouling. I do the waterline, Cindy does down to the turn of the bilge, and Philippa gets the underneath and keel. Seems perfectly reasonable to me!

P.S. Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?

Readers of the Latin poet Juvenal will recognise the quote immediately, but for any old Etonians reading this I shall translate: 'Who is to guard the guards themselves?' Or in our context, 'who is to look after our custodian, our archivist?'

As we all know and have every reason to be thankful for, Stephen Griffiths has worked tirelessly - and sometimes thanklessly - for the good of the Club in an effort to collect, collate, record and order the many pieces of paper and photos which he has found in published material and recovered from owners, the Desty family and other sources.

Stephen has produced for us the Builder's List, a record of all boats built by the Destys, and endeavours to keep it up to date by scanning advertisements in the yachting press to track the sale of Ramparts. He single-handedly trawled back copies of magazines and his extensive library of books to produce a Published Material book. He also contributed to the making of the DVD by Mike Nicholson on the Rampart Story.

However, Stephen has many other things he wishes to complete, including his own autobiography, and he would wish to relinquish the role of archivist. We met in London and over a very good lunch at the Chelsea Arts Club mapped out a way ahead for the archives.

Firstly we would like to re-issue the Published Material book. This may be unknown to newer members but it contains published articles, advertisements, line drawings, builder's specs, etc on Ramparts going back to the war years. The original book produced by Stephen had photocopied pages and the reproduction from the original articles was not always very good. We would like to scan the originals and produce a smarter version.

To achieve this we need a willing 'scanner' - gap year student? - who has time to visit Stephen and access his material. Probably a few days' work and a suitable remuneration could be offered.

Secondly we need a relief for Stephen. Someone who has time and enjoys collating, recording and maintaining the history of the Class.

Thirdly, should we produce a 'Book of Ramparts'? A mixture of some of the detail in the Builder's List accompanied by photos and short stories.

Fourthly, where do we hold our 20th anniversary? Dinner on the Gundeck of HMS Victory, or the Mary Rose museum, or perhaps the Cutty Sark?

I commend members to the addressing of priorities one and two above.

I shall raise this at the AGM and I hope we have some ideas, and even offers of help! Now, that might be quite a novel experience! **CM**

Cont. from front page:

Every year I follow the same pattern. A few little winter outings in Roly, up and down the Thames then in March it's the end of year tax accounts, rushed through as I know the ROC News must be started at least by April. This year, it all became a nightmare as my computer slowly started dying, first one program wouldn't respond then another. As I cling on to all the technology by the skin of my teeth I started to panic. Fortunately, Hugh (Oyster Boy) came to my aid and took my sickly pc to work, where they know about things like this. He pronounced the software totally screwed up and downloaded all my data onto this sparkling MacBook Pro. So far, so good. However, commencing accounts and publishing a magazine didn't seem like the best time to learn a whole new operating system and publishing program. Tony crept around me as, hyperventilating, I got to grips with things. Luckily, Ben on the pier as well as Hugh, popped in and helped me with my list of 'how do I do x' sort of questions and if you are reading this, then I made it through. As this MacBook is so amazing and does such whizzy things, I'm hoping



Roly feels at home with the Thames Barges on Hermitage Pier



Friends and family join us for the trip back past Parliament and the London Eye on a february evening

to produce a much more professional magazine than before, in half the time. Of course, I can only do that if you all send me your articles and photos.

In the next issue, I hope to introduce you to our new members, Slawick Fermé who has bought Jaldá in Cherbourg and Colin and Becky Cooter, who have bought Pop Watts in Chichester.

Fingers crossed for a super summer, happy cruising, Liz Poole (Ed)



Penny Jane Basking in the October sunshine when Christopher really, really meant to start working on her.

Of course I have the best of intentions. After all, it is merely a question of some applied project management, a sensible programming into the diary and the will to carry it out. What out? Well, the work package of course.

The best time to get some of the work done is in the autumn after she comes out of the water. The days still have residual summer heat and the list of problems - more importantly the ideas of how to solve them - are fresh in the mind. If only I practise what I preach.

Here is a photo of Penny Jane basking in the late October sun. I should have taken the chance to: get into the engine to change filters; touch-up the paintwork inside; perhaps a coat of varnish on the spars before covering them for the winter; touch-up the cracks in the outside paintwork to prevent rain water ingress and subsequent freezing... and a few more things no doubt. But I didn't so they all had to be done in the cold of Feb/March. The definition of madness is repeating the behaviour but expecting a different result.

We did have a couple of years in a mud berth but that was not very pleasant - it was, however, very cheap. This photo was taken the morning of our 'launch' back to the mooring. Snow fell hard at about 8 o'clock but the forecast was that it would clear by midday and the HW we needed. The forecast was right - thank the Lord.

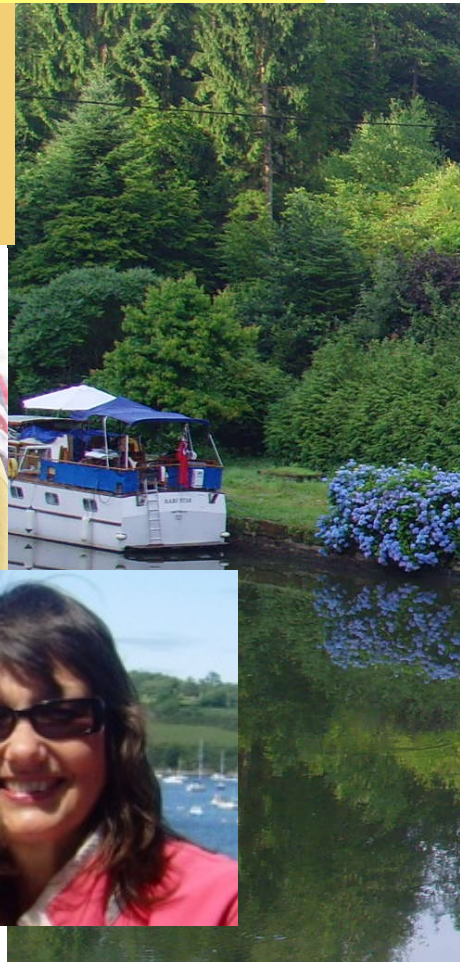
However, we have now decided that we will take her out of the water every year. We have experimented with leaving her afloat but her planks are very wet and the moisture content is such that pressure with the flat of a screwdriver will produce water bubbling up from the wood. The boatyard's advice is to let her dry out a bit every winter. The downside is that she does take a day or so to 'take-up' and it is always a bit of a worry as to whether she will do so completely. For that reason we always have a couple of days alongside in the marina before taking her out to the buoy. At the time of writing [mid-April] we are still ashore. Hey ho!
by Christopher Morrison

The Run to the Sun

Sabi Star's Journey to the Mediterranean

By John and Julie Gillies

Honfleur Astern, we are on our way.



In 2010 Julie and I decided that the time had come for an extended cruise. It became rather a 'now or never' event so a loose itinerary was developed with a target of a gentle cruise through the French canals to the Mediterranean.

Having thrashed our various sailing vessels up and down the North Sea and round and round triangles over the Southend mud in everything from Cadets to Flying Dutchman and Tornados we fancied some more variety, and guaranteed sun. One particularly wet spring day in 2004 saw us visit Dartmouth where we became the fourth custodians of Sabi Star, our Rampart 48TSDY. This is a semi displacement twin engine motor yacht of iroko on oak with teak and mahogany brightwork.

As we had done no cruising in the south west we decided to base our sailing activities in Devon for a number of years and had wonderful sailing for six years, extending between the Isle of Wight and The Lizard.

In 2011 we had intended to head straight for the French canals but family illness meant that we could not be away from home so decided to cruise from Dartmouth along the south coast and up the Thames to Henley.

This was a wonderful coast hopping experience, crewed at various times by club members and friends and dodging gales and high winds. One of the highlights was following the tide up the Thames and through the heart of London to spend a night on Cadogan Pier before progressing into the non-tidal reaches.

This gave us some experience in inland waterways and passing through locks. In particular, air draft, which had never featured in my navigation assessments, became very important.

We then returned to take a berth in the River Hamble on the south coast to over winter in 2011 and 2012 and took the opportunity to have some minor engineering work carried out by specialists available in that area.

After an early May shake down cruise in 2012, at the beginning of June we headed out of the Hamble, past the eastern tip of the Isle of Wight and the Nab light tower, and straight across the 90 miles to enter Honfleur 12 hours later. It was an interesting passage with visibility down to a couple of miles and force 6 breeze testing our hydraulic stabilisers.



Peaceful mooring on the Vosges Canal

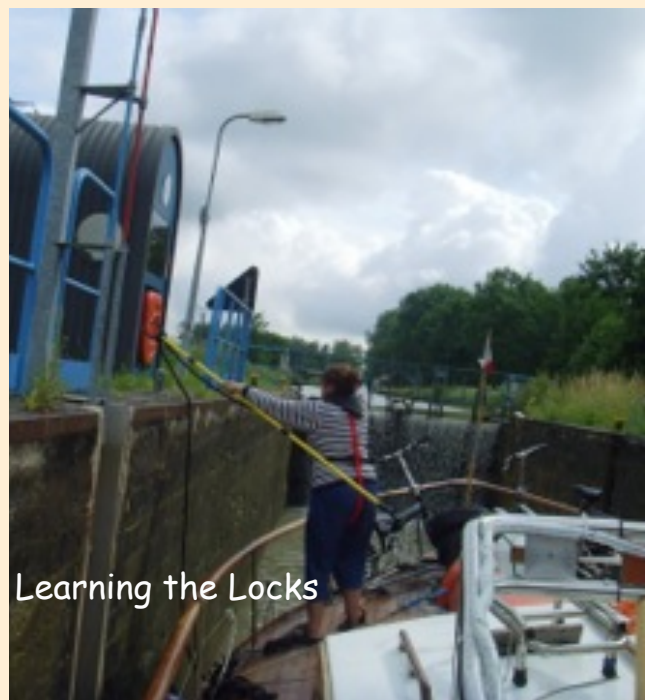
For those who haven't been there, Honfleur is a delightful town protected by an outer lock. We spent a day there and early the next morning caught the tide up to the first stopping point at Rouen where we purchased our VN C carnet for entering the French inland waterways. This was quite an interesting exercise and introduced me to the rather strange Gaulic administration practices of officialdom but eventually all was sorted out and we were able to continue on our way.

We entered our first lock at Poses where we moored for the night to await our shore support team. My crew changed, leaving Julie and me, together with our two dogs, to continue alone.

The upper Seine is very busy with commerce and the lock keepers are rather impatient. We experienced some quite nerve-wracking passages through the area, eventually stopping in a disused lock for our first night and discovering how difficult it is to get two dogs up steep lock side ladders for their necessary exercise.

We departed the next morning in brilliant sunshine which was to stay with us for most of our trip. Our second stop was at the Isle de Lion just before the junction with the River Oise. This is a very useful stopping off point as it is a quiet marina and had the huge

benefit of a fuel pontoon. There is a big issue on the supply of fuel for pleasure craft and the availability of white diesel varies enormously. Red diesel is of course completely banned for pleasure vessels.



Learning the Locks



Sabi Star
in Rouen,
before the
Wheelhouse
was
removed by
Will Sterling
from
Plymouth

We decided not to go through Paris but turned north onto the Oise, which is a delightfully quiet waterway as we started to get used to lack of tide and current.

We proceeded happily up to the junction with the River Aisne where we started to move east again. This canal was extremely quiet and fitted with automatic locks. We had our own VNF chaperone following us by car and appearing at various locations to make sure that we were proceeding in a satisfactory manner. It was all very easy and we were discovering how to wedge into the smaller locks without bouncing off of the sides too badly. The speed limit in many of these locations is 4 km an hour and with twin engine twin screw vessel like ours it was difficult to travel so slowly. The scenery is lush and there are many places to stop but, alas, many of the towns are suffering severe deprivation and most shops and provision stores have now closed. There is however, always a ladies hairdresser to keep up standards.

At this stage we did not feel as though we were moving towards our intended goal and having been travelling for three weeks, started to have some slight concerns over the distances involved. However, we eventually started to head south and reached Reims and onto the lower canals. One of the disadvantages of a sea going vessel is the air draught. As we progressed south we found that our raised steering position which has a full structural roof, was getting closer and closer to the maximum height. After a scrape on one bridge we filled our water ballast bags which we had bought for the purpose, both

taking a ton of water, and dropped our water line by 2 inches. This was initially successful and we proceeded successfully towards Strasbourg and our chosen route along the Voges canal. However, we were then advised that a lock side collapse meant that the canal was closed so we proceeded towards Nancy with the intention of going to Strasbourg and down the Rhine to make a wide detour. However, fortunately the repairs were carried out very quickly and we were able to proceed southwards. By then we were in the champagne region and the pleasure of French food and wine was starting to have its effect. We had also wound down our own activities and were quite content to cover no more than 15-20km a day. We skirted Toul in eastern France, onto the Moselle river and then back into the canals. The Voges is a charming canal route although over burdened with 98 locks. Each lock has a road bridge and these are in rather poor condition. In addition, the wet summer that was occurring to the north of us was causing the levels in the canal to rise. Although we were in very warm and sunny weather, the effect of the height of the canal and the poor condition of the bridges meant that the air draught was severely reduced. At lock 21 we were simply unable to get under the bridge despite flooding the bilges and loading up as much as we could with fuel and water. There was nothing for it but to contact a friendly boat builder and arrange for him to come over and cut the roof off to make the dog house demountable.

Next issue: 'Topless in France' Removing the Doghouse/Wheelhouse



That low Bridge!



Once the top was off a parasol was deployed against the hot sun and then it started to rain!

Fortunately this was at the time of the Bastille Day celebrations and so we moored at the small town of Charmes and took part in the commemorations which at least added some pleasure to the rather worrying process of taking saws to our lovely boat.

Our shipwright, Will Stirling from Stirling and Son at Plymouth managed an absolute miracle over two days, dismantling the upper structure and creating a very pleasant open steering position.

We stayed at Charmes for a week and were visited by our good friends Richard and Sharon who had attended a motoring meeting in Italy in their magnificent sports car. They gave a great boost to our spirits and on 19th July we headed off yet again.

Without the protection of the roof on the steering position the hot sun was quite a problem so we acquired a parasol. Of course as soon as we were settled with this the weather started to change and we had two days of torrential rain. While we were able to protect our steering position adequately there were some unfortunate leaks which required prompt resolution and the sewing machine was in considerable use as we made impromptu waterproof covers.

After this the process became one of the most delightful experiences I have experienced. Although our fame as the mad Anglais who had cut their roof off seemed to be preceding us through the barging towns, we met nothing but pleasant and helpful people and after a further few days, emerged from the canal system onto the upper Soane river.

To be able to go from 4km an hour to 15km an hour was a delight which the engines thoroughly enjoyed and quickly got rid of the smoke which was starting to build up as a result of the slow running.

We headed south and the weather was getting hotter and hotter with temperatures in the 30s every day. We stopped for a day at the new marina at Auxonne and decided that we liked it sufficiently to book for the winter.

We continued south and were joined firstly by our daughter Jessica for a few days and then our youngest son Jack and his girlfriend Rachel. We headed south past wonderful towns such as Macon where the wine region led to several very happy nights, eventually stopping at Lyon where Jack and Rachel left us and Johnathon, Natalie and our two grandsons joined.

Lyon is the confluence of the rivers Saone and Rhone and the current increases appreciably. It is also the start of the magnificent French hydroelectric plants. The locks are extremely deep, up to 26 metres drop, and we proceeded comfortably towards the south past magnificent castles and wonderful countryside with vineyards interspersed with rocky outcrops, stopping in comfortable locations including under the walls of the magnificent Palace of the Popes at Avignon.

We spent a few days there and on the morning that we were leaving had to chase intruders off the boat early in the morning as they were trying to steal our bicycles from the foredeck. This was the only occurrence of this type that we suffered and there were no lasting effects.

By now the weather was constantly very hot and although there is some current on the Rhone it was relatively slow at about 2 knots and was running with us.

After Avignon we had a comfortable ride down the lower portion of the Rhone and rather than go straight into the Mediterranean decided to turn right onto the Rhone a Sete canal and made our first stop in the wonderful medieval town of Aigues Mortes. This is a wonderful town close to the coast and we then passed through the bridges and out into the Mediterranean for a brief foray.

After a couple of days of enjoyment at Aigues Mortes Johnathon and his family had to return home for cadet week at Thorpe Bay Yacht Club in which Johnathon was heavily involved.

Julie and I carried on west, stopping at the many available moorings although the area is busy with hire craft. We eventually moored at Frontignan and used the train for easy access to Sete. This is in the middle of the water jousting area, which culminates in a big festival at the end of August. As far as we can understand, married men try to kill unmarried men by rowing at them with steel tipped lances. Introduce wine and a general French mayhem, recipe for riotous behaviour!

Throughout August the weather was exceptionally hot and at the middle of August we were joined by our daughter Jessica and, a few days later, her partner Pete. We had a very pleasant week in warm and comfortable weather leading up to the end of August.

The only remarkable occurrence was the appearance of the occasional heavily laden shipping travelling along the canal. This canal is quite shallow and narrow. The result is that boats moored along the bank suffer from an extreme suction from the passing ship.

As the moorings are generally on our own ground anchors and pegs it was common for the moorings to be pulled out of the ground and for boats to be left spinning in the middle of the canal. This happened to us twice. Fortunately we were on board on both occasions and there were no ill effects.

Another interesting location is at the central VNF wharf. Many boats make it to the Mediterranean and the majority by far are glassfibre. The number of boats which are abandoned or do not have their fees paid seems to be considerable and there is a boat graveyard at this wharf with hundreds of hulls piled on top of one another rather like an old style car breakers yard.

At the end of August the weather started to change. A mistral wind started to blow and many boats from the Mediterranean sought shelter at the inland ports.

After three days at the beginning of September there seemed to be a lull in the wind and the forecast had improved so we decided to start to head north.

'As the moorings are generally on our own ground anchors and pegs, it was common for the moorings to be pulled out of the ground and for boats to be left spinning in the middle of the canal'.

We had an easy ride back up the canal and decided to visit Beaucaire which is a dead end since it was shut off at its junction with the River Rhone. We arrived there late in the afternoon with very strong wind blowing. We found it difficult to find a mooring so moored to an available spot in one of the hire boat yards. This turned out to be a very good plan as there were secure bollards and during the

night the wind rose to about 60 knots, continuing for the next day.

During the morning, in the high winds, one of our dogs was blown off the foredeck and into the water. Fortunately she was a strong swimmer and found her own way to a launching ramp to regain dry land, but this gives an idea of the strength of the wind when it is channelled down the canal.

This proved to be the worst of the weather and early the following morning, in bright sunshine and calm conditions, we left the Sete a Rhone canal and returned to the River Rhone. The current was against us at this point and our progress was significantly slower than when we came down. We were however still able to average about 8 knots over the ground. Being a sea boat head winds and head current didn't affect us too badly but a number of the smaller inland boats had to give up and await an improvement in the weather.

We motored for some fairly long days, about four of which were for 8 or 9 hours to make some significant distance north. At this point we started to suffer some engine problems with our port engine. I thought that the filters were blocked as we had had some problem with the fuel, changed these and managed to get it restarted. However, after a little while the engine stopped again and continued to give us considerable problems. I employed two engineers at different ports to look at the engine but surprisingly neither of them seemed to have much idea. I eventually tracked the problem down to a defective valve in the lift pump and as soon as this was identified and repaired, the engine ran perfectly. It annoys me that I paid in the region of 200 Euros to these engineers who were woefully incompetent.

It seems essential to have a good level of engineering knowledge oneself, as is ever the case with boating. We missed out Avignon on the way back, instead calling at the small sand barge area known as Port Deux. This was a charming little area with about 100 moorings in the middle of nowhere with sand extraction taking place all round. We stayed there one night and then moved on to Cruas where we arrived in time to see a final stage of a women's cycle race through the Rhone valley which seems to have major significance. As far as I could gather the British team won and there were considerable celebrations.

We stayed for two days at Cruas and noted that the current

against us was increasing considerably. As one approaches each of the hydroelectric plants the current is significant but it was building up noticeably and the closer we got to Lyon the stronger the current was. As we were only running on one effective engine at this stage we had a very slow ride on the last stages until we were able to get beyond the confluence of the two rivers and join the Saone.

The weather by this stage in mid September was still very pleasant but starting to cool slightly and the evenings were beginning to draw in. As the French holiday season was now well passed we had the pick of the moorings with a very pleasant ride in clear rivers back to our pre-booked winter mooring at Port Royal at Auxonne.

Overall we had been away for four and a half months, travelled nearly 2,000 nautical miles and enjoyed the most wonderful experience. It has taught us that there is no such thing as the perfect boat. All have their advantages and disadvantages being, either too long, too short, too high, too low, too deep or too shallow. Our chosen material of timber was most forgiving but equally we took some scrapes, which will need repair. The steel boats seem to suffer badly from rust and the glass-fibre boats are too fragile and need a lot of protection.

Overall we had a fantastic time and can't wait for the opportunity to do it again.

Next issue we'll hear Julie's side of the story!



DIY Fuel Polishing (Cleaning) System.



Jeremy Pierce

The Problem---1/The fuel bug. 2/ Contaminated fuel.3/ The introduction of "bio fuel" which tends to settle out if left for any length of time without movement resulting in the "FAME" (Fatty Acid Methyl Ester otherwise known as vegetable oil)content settling out and sinking to the bottom of the fuel tank. This will be the first thing sucked up by the engine when you first start and will result in damage to the fuel pump and pipes if not prevented .

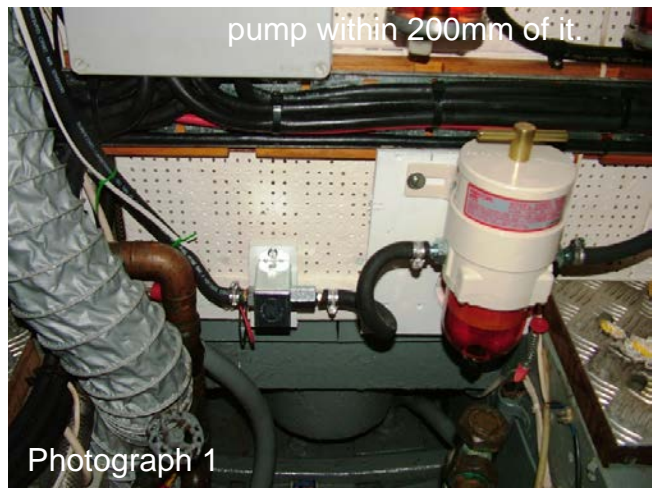
I have heard of at least 2 engine failures, both of which were diagnosed as "FAME" damage. The further introduction of bio diesel is only going to increase the problem. At the present time FAME free fuel is available at most coastal marinas in the UK. I am told that inland waterways only supply bio diesel, this is also the case on the Continent. It is also wise to "stir" your fuel from time to time to help prevent diesel bug. Static fuel is an ideal breeding ground for the bug to get established if you have any traces of water in it. Fuel polishing removes water and dirt particles from the fuel tank.

Having done considerable research I find there are basically 2 types of system. 1/ In line with the main feed to the engine. 2/ Completely separate system to the engine supply. The whole idea of the system is to not only "clean" the fuel , but to stir it so that the "FAME" content does not "settle out" and water is removed.

The first system, although very simple to fit, does not complete the job in that it does not stir the fuel, it simply filters it on the way to the engine via a sophisticated filter. However the second system does both.

Basically there are 2 main components 1/ A separate small electric fuel pump (112 Ltr/hr 12 or 24V) to circulate the fuel and 2/ a high grade 10 micron Racor filter. All parts are readily available on line from ASAP Supplies with lots of advice as well.

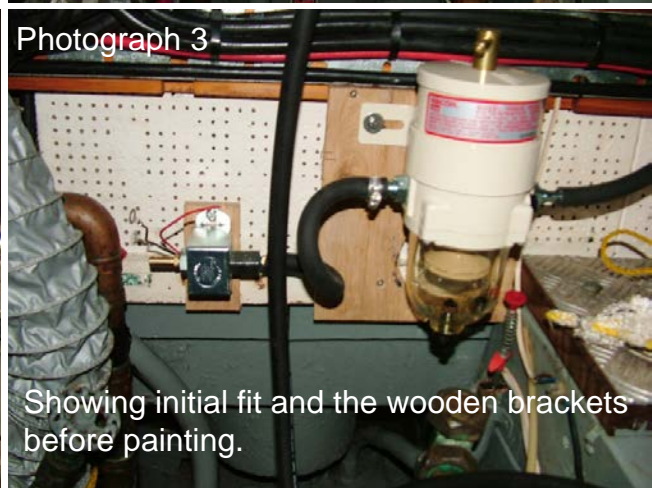
The system--- First of all you have to decide where to fit the 2 components, pump and filter, they should not be below the bottom of the fuel tank and the filter must be on the vacuum side of the pump preferably within 200mm of it. See below:-



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3

Showing initial fit and the wooden brackets before painting.

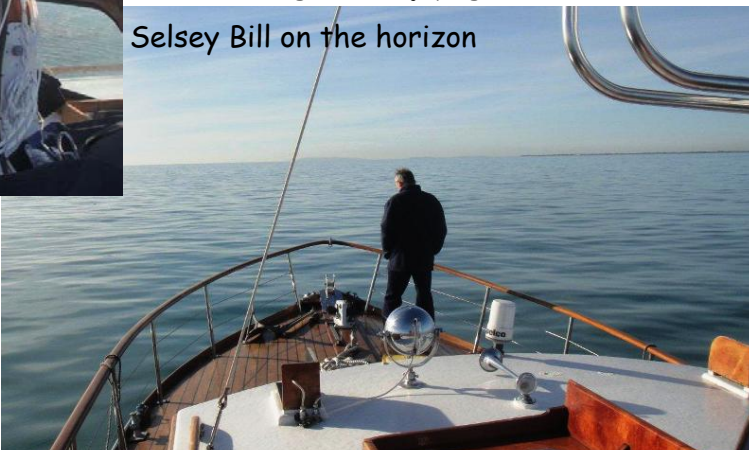
James Humfreys at the helm



Who says cruising is a seasonal thing! by James Humfreys

Highland Beauty made passage from Shoreham (after a two week visit), to Birdham (home berth), on 18th November, in delightful conditions; so nice, in fact, that we remained on the upper bridge throughout, enjoying the sunshine.

Selsey Bill on the horizon



It seems a shame to enjoy our little ships only during summer months. I gave a lunch onboard on 12th January, on a cold wet day and had two guests 'complaining' of being too warm (thanks to the new onboard heating system !)

Fuel Polishing Continued:-

It is advisable to do a trial fit (Picture number 3) then run the various pipes to make sure that there are no kinks. When finally fitting the pump a little tip is to cut some small rings (3mm) off the pipe to go between the pump and the barer you are screwing it to, this helps reduce the vibration coming from the pump when running. Remember this system can and should be run when the engines are NOT running. The pump only uses milliamps.

The pipe work--- See photograph number 2. The ideal set up would be to take fuel from the bottom of one side of the tank and return it to the other side at the top. It is first important to establish where you are going to extract and return the fuel. Making sure you do not impede the main engine or generator feed and return. The picture shows that I have placed a "T" junction on the main feed pipe to the starboard engine where it comes out of the tank, this extracts fuel from the bottom of the tank just above the dirt pan. The pipe going South is to the engine and the pipe going North is to the "fuel polisher". It is vital that each pipe has a valve of some kind on it so that you can isolate the polisher. Do remember to turn on the fuel to the engine and off to the polisher when starting the engine otherwise you will come to a grinding halt and wonder why ! Obviously the reverse is necessary when you want to operate the polisher. Do not try to operate it when running the engine because it will impede the return. If of cause you have established a totally separate extraction point this is not necessary, I am just reluctant to drill to many holes in the tank ! The return is a different matter, in my case it was necessary to drill a 16mm hole in the top of the tank (Bottom left of the picture) to take a 15mm threaded pipe to attach both the external and internal fittings. A little tip hear, if you place a powerful magnet close to the drill it will attract the filings so they won't fall into the tank. Again in my case I was able to

fit a right angle stud with an olive banjo fitting on the inside to attach about half a metre of 10mm copper pipe running away to the left inside the tank and through the tank baffle in the top corner so that the returning fuel fell on the other side of the baffle to give it a bit more of a circulation.

Picture number 2 also shows all the bolts that hold down the observation "hatch" to the fuel tank. All these were removed to facilitate access to the inside of the tank. It also enabled me to hold a "cooking sieve" , sorry Patricia, under the hole I had to drill to catch any filings that got away from the magnet.

Running the system is up to you and will depend on the amount of fuel in the tank. However I believe 4-6 hours a month would be adequate but if you do it any more it will only improve things.

Parts List for Tudora. This will vary from boat to boat and also if you have 1 or 2 tanks, if you have 2 tanks there are a number of solutions. 1/ Build a portable system. 2/ Two completely separate systems for each tank. 3/ One system with diversion valves.

1. Racor 500FG 10 Filter.....
£172.50
2. 1 Fuel pump 12v 1/8 in -27 ports 121lph.....
£38.06

Plus various pipe work and fittings for attachment to tank and pump / filter.

Total cost in my case.....£292.

Time taken to fit complete.....8Hrs.

By
Roland
Phillips



Lotus Rose 32ft 1967

I recently tested my 32 foot Rampart, Lotus Rose during a rather interesting trip.

On Saturday 12th January we decided to tag along with friends, who were taking their boat on a small jaunt along the Welsh coast from our home port of Dinorwic to a small coastal village called Porth Dinllaen which has a lovely pub on the beach called the Ty Coch. A trip of about 12 miles.

We set off in a slight easterly wind and calm seas up to an area called Caernarfon bar. This is a point where the Irish sea rushes through a narrow gap into the straights between Anglesey and the mainland. Pushed by a big spring tide we made good headway up to this point.

On reaching the fairway buoy the picture changed rapidly. The slight breeze, as forecasted, became much stronger and the sea state matched it

We were very quickly facing very short but high waves battering us on the port side giving us the very familiar rolling effect.

Turning back at this point would have been quite difficult as this would have put us back onto the bar which was fast being uncovered exposing a dangerous sand bank that has been the undoing of many a vessel.

So by turning into the waves a bit more, taking it on the port quarter, made the passage slightly easier. However at this point anything below that wasn't well stowed, was either smashed or rolling about on the cabin floor.

For one hour we battled through heavy snow and increasing wind, which by now was up to 40 plus knots. In fact our sailing companion had to take down all his sails and continue under engine power.

Rafted up in a small bay and as night fell the sea calmed



That great Pub, 'The Ty Coch', so near and yet so far!



Tested to the extreme

We then made a decision to head for the nearest area of shelter which was in the lee of the mountain range with steep cliffs, that are so prevalent in this area. We were now encountering torrential rain and huge waves coming over the bow and crashing onto the wheel house, as we inched towards the shelter.

Once we'd achieved a certain degree of relief, we managed to crawl along this headland to reach our destination. We passed several lobster pots that seemed to appear from nowhere, which if fouled would have put us in an even worse predicament!

Arriving at our destination we were re-united with our sailing companions who had anchored in a small bay. Even in this sheltered spot, the sea state was still choppy and we anticipated a very unpleasant day and night.

It was decided that we should raft up alongside and having deployed as many fenders as we both possessed, we transferred onto their much heavier boat to sit it out.

As darkness fell the sea state calmed slightly, enough for us to contemplate a bite to eat.

Once fed and watered, we came to the conclusion that the best course of action was to stay put and sleep on the heavier vessel, as the Lotus was rolling too much to be able to sleep safely in the bunks without rolling out.

Thankfully, we all slept reasonably well.

We set our alarm for 7 o'clock and by 7.30 in the dark we set off homeward bound.

To our relief it was much calmer and as daylight dawned, the previously forecasted calmer weather arrived a day late. It took us 2 hours to get back to port at a very reasonable 7.5 knots.

Assessing the damage, we found we had broken the last of our wine glasses and several plates. Two light fittings and a few chunks of wood from internal fittings had also succumbed to the storm.

A positive note. Lotus Rose is 32 foot and her sea keeping qualities had been tested to the extreme. We shipped no water; she rode the waves beautifully; and the engines never missed a beat, despite several occasions nearly being on her side.

Forecasts are what they say they are and nothing else. Being at sea in the Rampart never gave me any concerns and actually drew a lot of admirers as she has always been labelled a "lovely river boat".

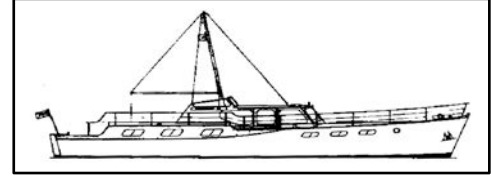
There are few doubters now.

Would I repeat a trip like that, probably not. Certainly my sister, wife Kim and Smudge, Winnie and Hattie, our three cocker spaniels, wouldn't be crewing again if I did.



ZZZZZZZZ

The crew's normally expected mode of cruising



Michael Robinson's Winter Picture Gallery

Malabar 111

Malabar III came under my stewardship in August 1999 but my first winter on board was not until 2000. Christmas Day that year was a momentous occasion as grandson Ryan was nearly born on board. There we were, daughter Robin, Olly and Michelle, having Christmas lunch of quails which my son Olly has never forgiven me for, when Michelle, the mother of Olly's children began to have contractions. Having timed them, Olly said, "Dad, I think we'd better move to the hospital."

With mobile in one hand and my land-line phone in the other, I conversed with both Lynington and Southampton hospitals with the result that Southampton said, "I think you'd better get to Lynington Hospital asap." So, around 4pm it was to there that we adjourned. With alarming speed we were soon joined by Michelle's "delightful" parents who'd sped down from Salisbury in a record 30 mins whilst Michelle got ready for a water birth (fitting for a coastal town I thought.)

Fortunately, the film "Titanic" played on TV only to be interrupted by Ryan's arrival at 7:30pm. After the film finished, we left Michelle in hospital and returned to our respective lodgings - in the case of Rob, Olly and myself it was back to Malabar III. As we clambered on board, the bag containing the Brussels Sprouts was found where I'd left it on the Bridge deck. I can't stand them anyway so it was not a disappointment.

Ryan,
learning
the ropes
shortly
after his
Christmas
Day birth



Boxing day found the happy grandparents posing for the local

parents and media as this was a rare event.

As long as I don't have to go ashore, heavy rain is not a problem indeed one can feel cosy watching the rain fall even if the noise means that TV listening is impossible. It is these wretched yachties with their rigging that I find hard to take as high wind howls through them. It's not loose halyards that are the problem any more just that wind through rigging that offends.

Of course, working central heating is essential - in my case a Webasto hot air machine had replaced the elderly Eberspacher - and one winter, it proved cantankerous and nerve-wracking as it decided occasionally to stop working.

How quickly the temperature dropped as the wind whistled through the many nooks and crannies on our vessels requiring the mains electric heating to be switched on.

As you'll know, electricity costs in marinas are exorbitant and, you probably also know this, but when you berth at, say, Hales in Yarmouth, they proudly tell you that electricity is included in the berthing fees.

However, when you return to home port your meter has moved on so we pay twice for the same electricity!

Frost on the pontoons can be treacherous, snow's not so bad and I've often delighted in making the first footsteps on new snow. Frost or rather ice is a different matter.





A couple of years ago, I gingerly stepped off the boat thinking that what I faced was a wet, concrete pontoon. How wrong I was. The previous owner had made some sturdy steel steps down onto the pontoon which have safety grips on them.

So, down I stepped, gingerly and just as I thought all was well I stepped onto clear ice on the concrete pontoon.

My feet went from under me and I landed with my back crashing onto the sharp edge of the steel steps. I lay there on the ice, groaning like a beached seal, barely able to speak, then moaning loudly to a non-existent audience.



Eventually I managed to get back on board where I stayed for many hours until it seemed the ice had melted.

Fortunately no serious damage was done to my back. But soon after I acquired copious quantities of salt. However, it was a salutary lesson that living on board is a lonesome experience.

**I wouldn't miss it
for the world.**



Talk Back

Dear Rampartees.

Q. Why do I buy The Times on Sunday?

A. Because it's so good at soaking up rainwater aboard Majonca.

Dear Friends. We have a little problem that will not, I imagine, be so very uncommon to a great many wooden boat owners. It is not so much the ingress of rain water that is the problem, but where exactly is it coming from? Could I ask you to look at the two images and use your wealth of experience to suggest from which area you would think the leaks are most likely to come. If you see my rough sketch, the drips always seem to hang from what I describe as the "Window Member". I wonder could it be at the area of the quarter round fillet on the Main Deck, or possibly from the screw fixings to the grab rail running along the top of the Coach Roof. Or both. We certainly can see tears running down from the top of the Window Member but still cannot be certain of the source. All replies will be greatly received and treated with the utmost indiscretion. Ken Joynes

Sorry, a bit late on this Ken....

I would have thought it unlikely to be from the handrail fixings as the water would appear on the deckhead at the base of the fixing. Similarly, if the window seal leaked then the water would appear underneath the window and would be obvious.

If it seems that the drips appear 'from nowhere' then they have presumably travelled from the point of ingress, through the wood and underneath the paint, until seeping out at a convenient spot.

I would put my money on the original entry being some spot along the quarter-round fillet - which my boat-builder calls a 'nosing' - on the seam between the deck and the upright of the coachroof.

Can't remember if your decks are ply or planks.

We had PJ's decks covered with fibre-glass mat which was taken a little way up the side of the coachroof, covering the join, and the nosing was secured on top of that. We have been perfectly watertight for 10 years. However:

You can only so that if you have a ply base

It is expensive as, to do it properly, all the deck fittings have to come off and the mat extends across the deck and under the rubbing strake

If water does get underneath the mat then it is very difficult to identify the entry point.

A solution may be to have the nosings removed, the joint re-sealed and the nosings replaced.

Or buy 2 copies of the Sunday Times!

Best wishes Christopher Morrison

The colour of the water could suggest that it is running through materials that have a wood preservative in them. On a wooden boat every joint is suspect and is why I have used Coelan on the decks. I have also invested in a full winter cover, which I will not remove until May.

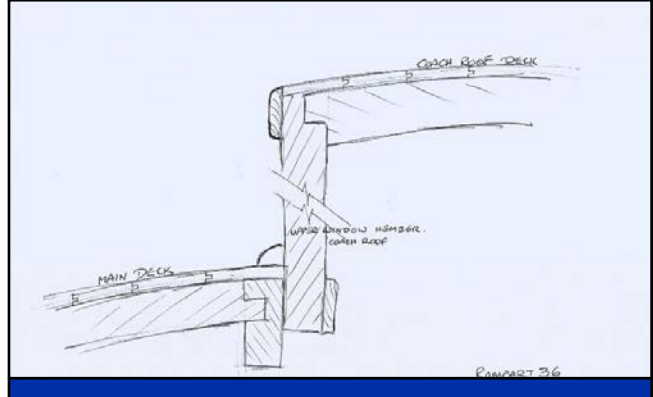
If the leaks are sporadic, could they be condensation?

My worst ones were not resolved until the joint between coachroof and deck were completely re formed. Also, rebedding the windows is a big job but resolved several leaks on Sabi Star. Totally useless comments, but at least I care!

Kind regards, John Gillies

Hi Ken,

I've been having a bit of a think about your leak. Here are a few suggestions, if you've already tried them sorry.



1. What is the deck head covered with, Canvas, epoxy or ply ? Check the whole area for cracks in the surface, the water may be entering anywhere on the roof and tracking. Is it possible to remove the covering around the area of the leak entry, if so and you do this you may discover discoloration, you can then track it back to the point of entry.
2. This suggestion is last resort. Drill a 5-10 mm hole at the point of entry being careful not to drill right through, and inject Sikiflex into the hole. As you pull back the "gun" stick masking tape over the hole to stop it flowing out. Remove in 24 hrs when set.
3. Very carefully with a torch try to trace the run of water, you will find the light from the torch reflects differently from the paint surface. You will hopefully run back to point of entry to the cabin. Not necessarily the point of entry from the outside but it will give an indication. Mark the run with a pencil and then start to inject at the source "Captains Tolleys Creeping Crack Cure". Yes that is its name and is available from any good chandler. I hope this may help. Jeremy Pearce (expert bodger).

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